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A  
CONFESSION  
OF  
FAITH,

PENNED  
By an Orthodox man of the  
reformed Religion:

*Agenda  
Chap. 23*

Dedicated to some eminent  
Persons, now assembled in  
PARLIAMENT.



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## A Confession of Faith.



Beleeve that nothing is without beginning but God, no nature, no matter, no spirit but one and the same God ; That God as he is eternall, almighty, onely wise, onely good in his nature, so he is eternall Father, Sonne and Spirit in persons.

I beleeve that God is so holy, pure, and jealous, as it is impossible for him to be pleased in any creature, though the worke of his owne hands : So that neither Angell, Man, nor World, could stand or can stand one moment in his eyes, without the beholding of the same in the face of a Mediatour ; and therefore that before him, with whom all things are present, the Lamb of God was slaine before all worlds, without which eternall counsell of his it was impossible for him to have descended to any work of creation, but he should have enjoyed the blessed and individuall society of three Persons in Godhead onely for ever. But that out of his eternall and infinite goodnesse and love, purposing to become a Creator, and communicate with his creatures, he ordained in his eternall counsell, that one person of the Godhead should be united to one nature, and to one particular of his creatures, that so in the person of the Mediatour

the true ladder might be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures ascend unto him : So that God by the reconcilment of the Mediatour, turning his countenance towards his creatures, (though not in the same light and degree) made way unto the dispensation of his most holy and secret will ; whereby some of his creatures might stand and keepe their state, others might fall and be restored, and others might fall and not be restored in their state, but yet remaine in their beeing, though under wrath and corruption, all 'with respect unto the Mediatour ; which is the great mysterie, and perfect center of all Gods wayes with his creatures, and unto which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer.

That hee chose (according to his good pleasure) man to be that creature, to whose nature the person of the eternall Son of God should be united : And amongst the generations of men, elected a small flock, in whom (by the participation of himselfe) he purposed to expresse the riches of his glory : all the ministration of Angels, damnation of Divels and Reprobates, and universall administration of all creatures, and dispensation of all times, having no other end, but, as the wayes and ambages of God, to be further glorified in his Saints, who are one with the Mediatour, who is one with God.

That by the vertue of this his eternall counsell touching a Mediatour, he descended at his own good pleasure, and according to the times and seasons to himselfe knowne, to become Creator, who by his eternall Word created all things, and by his eternall

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eternall Spirit doth comfort and preserve them.

That he made all things in their first estate good, and removed from himself the beginning of all evill and vanity unto the liberty of the creature, but reserved in himselfe the beginning of all restitution, to the libertie of his grace, using neverthelesse, and turning the falling and defection of the creature, (which was to his prescience eternally knowne) to make way to his eternall counsell touching a Mediatour, and the worke hee purposed to accomplish in him.

That God created Spirits, whereof some kept their standings and others fell, hee created Heaven and Earth, and all their Armies, and Generations, and gave them constant and everlasting lawes which we call nature, which is nothing but the laws of the creation; which lawes neverthelesse have had three changes or times, and are to have a fourth or last: The first, when the matter of heaven and earth was created without formes. The second, the *interim* of perfection of every dayes worke. The third, by the curse, which notwithstanding was no new creation: And the last at the end of the world, the manner whereof is not yet fully revealed: So that the lawes of nature which remaine, and now governe inviolably till the end of the world, began to be in force when God first rested from his workes, and ceased to create; but received a revocation in part by the curse, since which time they change not.

That notwithstanding God hath rested and ceased from Creation since the first Sabbath, yet, neverthelesse, he doth accomplish and fulfill his divine will in all things, great and small, singular and generall,

as fully & exactly by providence, as he could by miracle and new creation, though his working be not immediate and direct, but by compasse; not violating nature, which is his owne law upon the creature.

That at the first the soule of man was not produced by heaven or earth, but was breathed immediately from God; so that the wayes and proceedings of God with Spirits, are not included in nature, in the lawes of heaven and earth, but are reserved to the law of his secret will and grace, wherein God worketh still, and resteth not from perfecting the worke of redemption, as he resteth from the worke of creation, but continueth working till the end of the world; what time that worke also shall bee accomplished, and an eternall Sabbath shall ensue. Likewise, that whensoever God doth transcend the law of nature by miracles, (which may ever seem as new creations) hee never commeth to that point or passe, but in regard of the worke of redemption which is the greater, and whereto all Gods signes and miracles doe referre.

That God created man in his owne Image, in a reasonable soule, in innocencie, in free-will and soveraigntie: That he gave him a Law and Commandment which was in his power to keepe, but he kept it not: That man made a totall defection from God, presuming to imagine that the Commandements and prohibitions of God, were not the rules of good and evill, but that good and evill had their owne principles and beginnings; and lusted after the knowledge of those supposed beginnings, to the end to depend no more upon Gods will revealed, but upon himselfe

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himself and his own light as a God, then which there could not be a sin more opposite to the whole Law of God: That yet neverthelesse this great sin was not originally moved by the malice of man, but was insinuated by the suggestion and instigation of the Diuell, who was the first defective creature, and fell of malice and not by temptation from another.

That upon the fall of man, death and vanitie entered by the Justice of God, and the Image of God in man was defaced, and heaven and earth which were made for mans use, were subdued to corruption by his fall: But then that instantly and without intermission of time, after the word of Gods Law became, through the fall of man, frustrate, as concerning obedience, there succeeded the greater word of the promise, that the righteousness of God might be wrought by faith.

That as well the Law of God, as the Word of his promise endure the same for ever; but that they have beene revealed in severall manners, according to the dispensation of times: For the Law was first imprinted in that remnant of light of nature which was left after the fall, being sufficient to accuse; then it was more manifestly expressed in the written Law; and was yet more opened by the Prophets, and lastly expounded in the true perfection by the Son of God, the great Prophet and perfect interpreter of the Law.

That likewise the word of the promise was manifested & revealed, first by immediate revelation and inspiration, after by figures, which were of two natures; the one the Rites and Ceremonies of the Law, the other the continuall Historie of the old world, and the Church

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Church of the Jewes , which though it bee literally true, yet it is for the most part pregnant of an Allegorie and shadow of the worke of the redemption to follow : The same promise or Evangel , was more clearly revealed and declared by the Prophets , and then by the Son himselfe , and lastly by the holy Ghost, which illuminateth the Church to the end of the world.

That in the fulnesse of time, according to the promise and oath , of a chosen lineage descended the blessed seed of the Woman, Jesus Christ, the onely begotten Son of God, and Saviour of the world, who was conceived by the power and over-shadowing of the holy Ghost, and tooke flesh of the Virgin *Mary*. That the Word did not onely take flesh, or was joyned to flesh, but was made flesh, though without confusion of substance or nature; so that the eternall Son of God, and blessed Sonne of *Mary* was one person : So as the blessed Virgin may be truly and Catholically called *Deipara* , the Mother of God ; so one, as there is no unitie in universall nature , not that of the soule and body of man, so perfect : For the three heavenly unities, whereof that is the second, exceed all naturall unities; the unitie first of the three persons in the God-head: secondly, of God & man in Christ: thirdly, of Christ and the Church , the holy Ghost being the worker of both these latter unities , for by the holy Ghost was Christ incarnate and quickned in the flesh, and by the holy Ghost is man regenerate and quickned in the spirit.

That Jesus the Lord became in the flesh a sacrificer and sacrifice for sinne , a satisfaction to the Justice



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Justice of God, a meritor of glory and the Kingdome, a patterne of all righteousness, a Preacher of the Word which himselfe was, a finisher of the Ceremonies, a Corner stone to remove the separation between Jew and Gentile, an Intercessor for the Church, a Lord of nature in his miracles, a Conqueror of death and the power of darknesse in his resurrection; and that he fulfilled the whole Councell of God, performed all his sacred offices and annointing on earth, accomplished the whole worke of redemption and restitution of mans nature to an estate superiour to the Angels, (whereas the state of man by creation was inferiour) and reconciled and established all things according to the eternall will of the Father.

That in time, Jesus the Lord was borne in the dayes of *Herod*, and suffered under the government of *Ponce Pilate* being deputy of the Romans, and under the high Priesthood of *Caiphas*, was betrayed by *Judas* one of the twelve Apostles, and was crucified at Jerusalem, and after a true and naturall death, and his body laid in the sepulchre, the third day he raised himselfe from the bond of death, and rose and shewed himselfe to many chosen witnesses by the space of divers dayes, and at the end of those dayes, in the sight of many, ascended into heaven, where he continueth his intercession, and shall from thence at the day appointed, come in great glory to judge the world.

That the sufferings and merits of Christ as they are sufficient to do away the sins of the whole world, so they are only effectuell to those which are regenerate

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rate by the holy Ghost, who breatheth where he wil of free grace, which grace, as a seed incorruptible, quickneth the spirit of man, & conceiveth him a new, a son of God, and member of Christ; so that Christ having mans flesh, and man having Christs spirit, there is an open passage and mutuall imputation, whereby sin & wrath was conveyed to Christ from man, and merit and life conveyed from Christ to man, which seed of the holy Ghost figureth in us the Image of Christ slaine or crucified, in mortification through a lively faith, and then reneweth in us the Image of God in holinesse and charitie; though both imperfectly and in degrees farre differing, even in Gods elect, as well in regard of the fire of the spirit, as of the illumination which is more or lesse in a large proportion, as namely in the Church before Christ, which yet neverthelesse was partaker of one and the same salvation with us.

That the worke of the spirit though it be not tyed to any meanes in heaven or earth, yet it is ordinarily dispensed by the preaching of the word, administration of the Sacraments, Covenants of the fathers upon the children, prayer, reading, the censures of the Church, societie of the godly, crosses and afflictions, Gods benefits, his Judgements upon others, miracles, & the contemplation of his creatures, all which, though some be more principall and perpetuall, God useth as the means of vocation and conversion of his Elect, not derogating from his power to call immediately by his grace, and at all hours and moments of the day (that is of mans life) according to his good pleasure.

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That the word of God, whereby his will is revealed, continued in revelation and tradition untill *Moses*, and that the Scriptures were from *Moses* time, to the times of the Apostles and Evangelists, in whose age, when after the comming of the holy Ghost, the teacher of all truth, they had delivered the tradition of Scripture, the booke of the Scripture was shut & closed, so as not to receive any new addition : And that the Church hath no power over the Scriptures, to teach or command any thing contrary to the written word, but is as the Arke wherein the tables of the first Testament were kept and preserved, that is to say, the Church hath onely the custody and delivery over of the Scriptures committed unto the same, together with the interpretation of them, but such onely as is conceived by themselves.

That there is an universall or Catholicke Church of God dispersed over the face of the earth, which is Christs Spouse and body, being gathered of the Fathers of the old world, of the Church of the Jewes, of the spirits of the faithfull dissolved, of the spirits of the faithfull militant, and of the names yet to be borne which are already written in the booke of life. That there is also a visible Church distinguished by the outward workes of Gods Covenant, and the receiving of the holy Doctrine, with the use of the mysteries of God and the invocation and sanctification of his holy name, together with regeneration by his spirit. That there is also a holy succession in the Prophets of the new Testament, and Fathers of the Church from the time of the Apostles and Disciples, which saw our Saviour in the flesh, unto the  
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consummation of the worke of the Ministrie, which persons are called from God by gifts or inward anointing, and this vocation of God followed by an outward calling and ordination of the Church.

I beleeeve that the soules of those that dye in the Lord are blessed, and rest from their labours, and enjoy the sight of God, yet so as they are in expectation of a further consummation of glory in the last day, at which time all flesh of man shall arise and be changed, and shall appeare and receive from Jesus Christ his eternall judgement, and the glory of the Saints shall then be full, and the kingdome shall be given up to God the Father, from which time all things shall continue for ever in that being and state which then they shall receive.

So as there are three times or parts of eternitie, (if so they may be called) The first, the time before beginnings, when the God-head was onely without the being of any creature; The second, the time of the mystery which continueth from the creation to the dissolution of the world; And the third, the time of the revelation of the sons of God, which time is the last, and is everlasting without change.

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